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Title: Need to restore the quota of foodgrains under P.D.S. to Kerala.

DR. K.S. MANOJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am highly obliged to you for giving me this opportunity.

Rice is the staple food of Kerala. But, unfortunately, only 15 per cent of the rice is cultivated, produced in Kerala. Kerala is more than 85 per cent deficient in production of food-grains and the requirements are met by Public Distribution System (PDS). PDS in Kerala is an effective instrument in checking the price of food-grains and other essential commodities.

Kerala has a population of 3.5 crore. There are about 70.25 lakh ration card-holders in the State with around 50 lakh APL card-holders. The Central allotment of APL rice was 1,13,420 MT per month till March 2007. This has been reduced to merely 17,056 MT tonnes from April, 2008 onwards leaving a shortage of 96,364 MT, that is about 85 per cent.

Sir, the present allotment of foodgrains is only 29,000 MT. The total requirement of food-grains for APL card-holders alone is 1,73,005 MT....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a debate, Dr. Manoj. Yes, please.

DR. K.S. MANOJ : I would request the hon. Food and Agriculture Minister here to restore the PDS allotment quota of Kerala, rice quota as well as wheat quota of Kerala, so that during the times of inflation and price rise it will be very beneficial to the people of Kerala. Nowadays more and more people are approaching the Public Distribution System....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly conclude.

DR. K.S. MANOJ : So, I urge upon the hon. Minister to look into the matter and restore the PDS quota at the earliest. Thank you.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (BADAGARA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to associate myself with the issue raised by Dr. Manoj.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA : Sir, I would also like to associate myself with Dr. Manoj.

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (MANJERI): Sir, I would also like to associate with this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members from Kerala are associating with him on this issue.[r23]